recommendations made in the IPCCI meeting for promoting trade including liberal issue of visas to businessmen.

(e) The interaction will help to promote trade and economic co-operation between India and Pakistan which cannot be quantified.

Concessions to EOUs

724. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have plans to extend hundred per cent concessions to the Export Oriented Units (EOUs), which are available to the Special Economic Zones (SEZs) at present;

(b) if so, the details in this regard and since when; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to get exemptions from the various States for State level taxes in favour of thes EOUs/SEZs?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI SATYABRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) and (b) The Scheme of Export Oriented Units (EOUs) and Special Economic Zones (SEZs) are two separate schemes of the Government to promote exports. The concessions provided under the two schemes are different.

(c) State Governments were requested to exempt EOUs and units of SEZs from levy of State level taxes. Most of the State Governments have already exempted EOU/SEZ units from the levy of State level taxes.

Lifting of ban on Indian items by Pakistan

725. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA:
DR. AKHILESH DAS:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether as a confidence building measure, Pakistan lately cleared atleast 73 items that it had banned for imports from India;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the items, if any, banned by India for imports from Pakistan, which have been cleared for imports from Pakistan in reciprocation thereof; and

(d) the other steps taken to promote mutual trade between the two countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI SATYABRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) and (b) In response to Prime Minister's Srinagar initiative of 18th April, 2003 and in follow up to the steps announced by Prime Minister in Parliament on 2nd May, 2003, Pakistan Prime Minister in his statement on May, 6, 2003 announced the inclusion of additional 78 items on the positive list of goods which can be imported from India. We are yet to receive any official notification in this regard from the Government of Pakistan.

(c) There is no ban on import of any item from Pakistan to India.

(d) As a signatory to WTO, India has continued to accord Most Favoured Nation (MFN) status to Pakistan. India has also been exchanging tariff concessions with South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) member countries under SAARC Preferential Trading Arrangement (SAPTA). Other trade promotion measures include exchange of business delegations, participation in fairs, exhibitions and Buyer Seller Meets etc.

Barriers in Agricultural Exports

726. DR. AKHILESH DAS:
SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Prime Minister during his visit to St. Peterburg, in his maiden speech at the enlarged dialogue of the G-8 called for phase-out of the trade distorting agricultural subsidies and removal of barriers to agricultural exports, while ensuring the livelihood and security of billions of farmers in developing countries.

(b) if so, what were the specific barriers in agricultural exports sought to be removed by the Prime Minister; and